



Writing Strategies

7 questions	18 questions	20 questions	12 questions	15 questions	1 question
Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development	Reading Comprehension	Literary Response and Analysis	Writing Strategies	Written and Oral English Language Conventions	Writing Applications

These are the 5 CAHSEE Writing Strategies Standards.

The CAHSEE uses 12 multiple-choice questions to test these standards. In this section, you do not write any essays, but you answer questions about writing. Most of the questions ask you to find and correct errors, and choose better words and phrases. You should be able to recognize clear, logical writing. You must identify purpose, audience, organization, and supporting details. Also, you will be expected to evaluate various research sources. See how you do on the ten questions in this chapter.

If you know some effective writing strategies, you can improve your own writing. You also can help your classmates improve their writing when you work in pairs and do peer responses.

These passages and questions are from a previous version of the CAHSEE. Read each passage and answer each question. After each question, a solution is provided to help you understand and practice your writing strategies skills.

10WS1.1 Establish a controlling impression or coherent thesis that conveys a clear and distinctive perspective on the subject and maintain a consistent tone and focus throughout the piece of writing. [3 questions]

10WS1.2 Use precise language, action verbs, sensory details, appropriate modifiers, and the active rather than the passive voice. [3 questions]

10WS1.4 Develop the main ideas within the body of the composition through supporting evidence (e.g., scenarios, commonly held beliefs, hypotheses, definitions). [2 questions]

10WS1.5 Synthesize information from multiple sources and identify complexities and discrepancies in the information and the different perspectives found in each medium (e.g., almanacs, microfiche, news sources, in-depth field studies, speeches, journals, technical documents). [1 question]

10WS1.9 Revise writing to improve the logic and coherence of the organization and controlling perspective, the precision of word choice, and the tone by taking into consideration the audience, purpose, and formality of the context. [3 questions]

Read this passage from a previous CAHSEE administration and the discussion and questions that follow.

ROUGH DRAFT

Appreciating the Forgotten

(1) Can you name a famous inventor? (2) Many of the world's inventors have helped improve our day-to-day lives and are well remembered, Alexander Graham Bell for the telephone, Benjamin Franklin for bifocals, and Thomas Alva Edison for the lightbulb. (3) However, many other inventors' names have been forgotten despite their remarkable accomplishments.

(4) For example, who was Ezra J. Warner? (5) Back in 1858, he was the first person to patent a can opener. (6) Although it was effective, it was also dangerous to use and didn't make it into households until 1870, when William Lyman introduced a model that was just as effective but much safer.

(7) Susan Hibbard's invention didn't transform the world, but it did make a difference for other women inventors. (8) She took old turkey feathers and bound them together to make the first feather duster. (9) When she went to get the patent for it in 1876, however, she had to battle in court to prove it was her idea. (10) Eventually, Hibbard won the patent for her invention. (11) Her fight helped other women gain confidence in their ideas, and their right to patent them.

(12) Alice H. Parker patented a furnace that could heat individual rooms of a building at different temperatures. (13) Both energy and money were saved by Parker's furnace, since the invention allowed people to heat only the rooms needed at a given time.

(14) These inventors, their creations certainly improving the lives of many people, may not have received worldwide fame for their achievements.

59C-2

Sample CAHSEE question**Which sentence would BEST begin Paragraph 1?**

- A** An invention is made when an inventor discovers how to solve a problem.
- B** Many inventions have proven to be unnecessary and sometimes dangerous.
- C** Inventors have created many amazing devices throughout history.
- D** There have been a lot of inventions that have helped people.

Strategy

Be aware of the overall subject matter of a passage when selecting the *best* opening sentence. Avoid a self-evident definition which would not capture anyone's attention or make one want to continue reading. Avoid an off-topic option since the passage is about forgotten inventors, not inventions. Avoid a concluding statement. This should lead you directly to the correct answer.

Sample CAHSEE question**Read the sentence from the passage.**

Both energy and money were saved by Parker's furnace, since the invention allowed people to heat only the rooms needed at a given time.

What is the BEST way to state the information in the underlined part of the sentence?

- A** Parker's furnace saved both energy and money,
- B** Saving both energy and money was Parker's furnace,
- C** Saved by Parker's furnace were both energy and money,
- D** Both energy and money have been saved by Parker's furnace,

Strategy

The question asks which is the *best* restatement of the underlined portion of the sentence. Notice that three options are written in the passive voice. The correct answer is the only option in the active voice. The active voice is considered the *best* choice. If you do not remember what active voice and passive voice are, you should review these distinctions. Compare these two sentences: **A** He threw the ball. **B** The ball was thrown by him. **A** is in the active voice because someone is performing an action. **B** is in the passive voice because an object is receiving an action.

L259C007

Sample CAHSEE question**Which is the BEST way to revise the sentence labeled 11?**

- A** Women were soon being granted more patents because of their confidence in their ideas.
- B** Gaining confidence in their ideas and their right to patent were other women of the day.
- C** Soon, women were gaining confidence in their ideas and confidence in their right to patent them.
- D** Her fight helped other women gain confidence in their ideas and their right to patent them.

Strategy

In order to determine the *best* way to revise sentences, look at all four options and try to offer some evaluation of their strengths as well as weaknesses. Notice that option **A** is stated in the passive voice. Option **B** is a very awkward sentence with the subject tacked on to the end of the sentence. Option **C** is a very wordy sentence because six words are needlessly repeated within the sentence. There is only one option that restates the original sentence in the most direct manner.

Read this passage from a previous CAHSEE administration and the discussion and questions that follow.

ROUGH DRAFT

The Amazing Earthworm

(1) The earthworm is quite amazing. (2) When you spot earthworms lying on the sidewalk after a big rain, they probably all look similar to you. (3) But in fact, there are more than forty thousand kinds of worms and almost three thousand types of earthworms alone. (4) Australia has one called Magoscolides Australis that can grow to be 10 feet long!

(5) The structure of the earthworm is interesting. (6) The outside of its body is divided into approximately one hundred segments. (7) However, even with all those parts, the earthworm has no eyes. (8) Its body produces slime. (9) The inside of the earthworm is mostly stomach. (10) It has five pairs of hearts and a brain the size of a grain of sand.

(11) Earthworms do quite a bit for our environment. (12) When earthworms eat organic matter, they digest it in the stomach and excrete it as "castings." (13) Worm castings are a main component of dirt. (14) It's the earthworm that gives us our rich soil for plant growth.

97A

L197A005

Sample CAHSEE question

Which of the following sentences provides additional support for the main idea of Paragraph 3?

- A Earthworms come to the surface when it rains.
- B Earthworms decompose matter at a faster rate than landfills do.
- C Earthworms create a series of tunnels through the dirt.
- D Earthworms prefer to eat fruit and vegetable scraps.

Strategy

Notice that the question asks for additional support for a particular paragraph. Make sure you have correctly identified the overall subject matter of a paragraph in order to answer these types of questions. Although three options are all true statements about earthworms, only one option deals with the subject matter of Paragraph 3.

L197A007

Sample CAHSEE question

What would be the BEST source of information on Australian earthworms?

- A a Web site for a company selling earthworms
- B a magazine article entitled “Earthworms: the Farmer’s Friend”
- C a book entitled *Earthworms From Around the World*
- D an Internet site on soil management using earthworms

Strategy

The question asks about the *best* source of information about Australian earthworms. Some options *might* contain information about Australian earthworms, but notice that these do not mention locations. The correct answer does suggest that many locations throughout the world will be considered. Since Australia is a continent with its own unique life forms, one option more than the others would most likely contain information about Australian earthworms.

For more practice on these types of questions, go to the Released Test Questions at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/resources.asp>.

